



**Montgomery County Commission on Veterans Affairs  
Meeting Summary Minutes  
December 20th, 2011**

**I. Call to Order & Introductions:** Bill Gray, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Commission on Veterans Affairs (CVA). Bill asked for all present to stand for a moment of silence for all of those who have given their lives and those who have been wounded for our country in the different conflicts in which our country has been engaged, and to remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. Approval of Minutes:** Mike Subin, Commissioner, made a motion to accept the minutes as written. J. Mauri Hamilton, Commissioner, seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the November Meeting Summary Minutes were unanimously approved. Approved minutes are available online at [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cva](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cva).

**III. MontgomeryWorks Veteran Services – Bob Pelletier, GCDF, Veterans Services**

Presentation: Montgomery Works Briefing to Commission on Veterans Affairs

[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/hhs/ads/VA/PDFs/mwpresentation.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/hhs/ads/VA/PDFs/mwpresentation.pdf)

Bob Pelletier serves as the Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) and Jan Larson serves as the Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP) for Montgomery County. MontgomeryWorks (MW) is funded by the State and County. LVER staff develop hiring opportunities within the local workforce by promoting the benefits of hiring eligible veterans. DVOP specialists provide intensive employment assistance to eligible veterans who have employment and training needs, in order to assist them to overcome barriers that prevent them from obtaining meaningful employment.

There are two one stop career centers located in Montgomery – Wheaton and Germantown. The veterans programs are funded by the Department of Labor (DOL). All services provided by MontgomeryWorks are free. Job seekers must first enroll in the Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE) prior to receiving services. DOL uses MWE to track usage and compile statistics. MW serves 1,800 veterans annually. They served approximately 2,000 veterans in 2010.

MW works collaboratively with partners to provide services. Partners include:

- The Career Transition Center manages MW.
- The Jewish Council for the Aging provides part-time minimum wage jobs for individuals 55 and older.
- Job Corps provides employment for youth ages 16 to 24.
- Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) assists people with disabilities find employment.
- Housing Opportunities Commission assists in locating house.
- Montgomery County Department of Health & Human Services has two representatives that assist job seekers at MW every Monday and Wednesday. No appointment is required.
- Health Care Navigator is a new program for residents who do not have health care. Cost is \$10.00 per month.
- Business Services develops hiring opportunities within the county by contacting businesses, Federal agencies and contractors, and employer associations to encourage the hiring and

advancement of qualified veterans. There are 457 federal contractors listed in MWE. Since October, 30 new companies have been added – 24 of which are federal contractors.

Montgomery County is the only county in the United States that has a one-stop center in a correctional facility. The Montgomery County Correctional Facility in Boyds has two computer terminals and serves all ex-offenders that are getting ready for release. Jan Larson works with incarcerated veterans once a month to ensure they have their DD214, to enroll them in MWE, and preparing their enrollment into the Re-entry Employment Services Program.

Military veterans and eligible spouses will receive Priority of Services (POS) at one stop career centers. Veterans eligible for POS are given access to employment, training and placement services at an earlier time or before persons who are not eligible for POS. You are a veteran if you are a former military service member or a National Guard Member or reservist who served on active duty military. A former service member is eligible for POS if he or she served at least one day in active military service and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. A spouse is eligible if his/her husband/wife was a veteran who has a total disability resulting from a service-connected disability or who died as a result of a service-connected disability.

Bob gives a MW presentation three times a month at the new Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) to retiring, separated and wounded active duty personnel. He provides an orientation to one stop career center services that they will receive and connects job seekers with the closest one stop career center in their hometown.

ProVet will assist veterans staying in Maryland with financial assistance to obtain license or certification. MW also works with apprenticeship programs with unions. Job seekers are hired through the union and receive paid training in the field of their choice.

[Mil2FedJobs](#) is a website developed by the Maryland DOL that helps translate military occupations to federal jobs.

In August, President Obama called on Congress to enact tax credits that will help veterans obtain employment. The Returning Heroes Tax Credit provides businesses that hire unemployed veterans with a maximum credit of \$5,600 per veterans, and the Wounded Warriors Tax Credit offers businesses that hire veterans with service-connected disabilities with a maximum credit of \$9,600 per veteran. The Veterans Gold Card entitles Post-9/11 veterans enhanced services including six months of personalized case management, assessments and counseling, at one-stop career centers. MW has not provided services to a veteran with a Gold Card yet and they are still waiting to receive guidance from the State of Maryland about providing these enhanced services.

Jan sends out a daily e-mail of approximately 200 job listings to over 650 veterans in Montgomery County. Job listings are compiled from MWE, Maryland Job Bank and Vet Central. He also sends out information about job fairs and the latest news from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Individuals interested in receiving the e-mails can contact Bob at 301-929-4378 (V) or e-mail [rpelletier@dllr.state.md.us](mailto:rpelletier@dllr.state.md.us).

A Homeless Veterans Integration Program provides services to assist homeless veterans find meaningful employment. The program is run by Way Station.

Clayton Smith, Veterans Service Officer, for Montgomery County is onsite at MontgomeryWorks in Wheaton every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday from 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. He assists veterans with benefits, obtaining VA forms and providing referrals or appointments to support agencies. Since October he has

worked with 35 veterans. To set up an appointment, call 301-248-0463 (V) or 1-800-446-4926 (Toll Free).

Since October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011, MW has prepared 44 resumes, referred 15 veterans to the Veterans Workforce Investment, served six ex-offenders at the MCCF who are veterans, and referred four veterans to the VA Small Business Association. MW runs a monthly job search seminar for all veterans. They must complete the seminar prior to enrolling in MWE. Almost every veteran has gained employment after 90 days once they have completed the training. MW has a successful retention rate.

Bob asked the Commission to assist in advertising the services provided by MW.

#### **IV. New Business**

Roland Kauffman, Commissioner, presented a certificate of appreciation from the inmates at the Roxbury Correctional Institution in Hagerstown to Bill Gray, Chair, for his dedicated service throughout the year.

Congress has passed a resolution that March 30<sup>th</sup> is “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day” to recognize Vietnam veterans across the country for their sacrifice and to demonstrate a warm welcome to these soldiers who returned from war to a politically divided country. Greg Hamilton, Active Participant, proposed to the Commission that a “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day” plaque be installed at the Silver Spring Civic Building (SSCB). The plaque would include a piece of artwork. Greg also proposed that a memory plaque be installed at the SSCB that would list the names of all Montgomery County military service members who have been killed in action as well as those who have died due to service-connected disabilities or injuries. Mike Subin, Commissioner, made a motion for him to present both proposals before County Executive Isiah Leggett. Roland seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was passed.

#### **V. Announcements**

Mike Subin, Commissioner, also serves as a Commissioner on the Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission (CJCC). He has proposed to the CJCC that they compile a booklet of veterans programs and services that can be given to judges, public defenders, assistant state attorneys, and the criminal defense bar, so they can refer veterans to resources. Hon. John McCarthy, Chair of CJCC and State's Attorney for Montgomery County, was in favor of developing the booklet.

Mary Lee Esty, LCSW-C., Ph.D, BCB, BCN, will present at the January meeting on the use of EEG biofeedback for the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI).

NAMI will be holding a veteran peer-to-peer support group on January 9<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church, 6601 Bradley Blvd, Bethesda. For info and to register, contact Rose Halper at 301-949-5852 x 105, e-mail rhalper@namimc.org.

**Adjournment:** 7:30 p.m.

#### **Next Full Commission Meeting:**

Tuesday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012, from 5:45 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at 401 Hungerford Drive, Rockville in the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Tan Conference Room. **\*\*PLEASE NOTE EARLIER MEETING START TIME\*\***

Respectively submitted:

Carly Clem, OSC

Betsy Luecking, Staff Liaison